A

LETTER

To a Diſſenting

Clergy-Man

OF THE

CHURCH

OF

ENGLAND,

CONCERNING

The *Oath of ALLEGIANCE* and Obedience to the Preſent Government.

Licenſed *Auguſt 21ſt.* 1690.

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THE
CLERGY-MAN'S
VADE MECUM:
OR THE
ENGLISH
CONCORDANCE.
The Words of ALL SCRIPTURE
Chearfulness to the Preacher, Comfort to
Printed for Richard Ballintine, and are to be sold
By him in the Old-Bailey. 1696.

A LETTER *to a Diſſenting* CLERGY-MAN, *&c.*

Dear Brother!

YOURS to me abounds with Complaints of your preſent Sufferings, and your Fear of ſomething worſe that may befal you, and truly I cannot read it without a real Sympathy, and ſuch a Compaſſion as our ancient Friendſhip requires; for as one Member can take no pleaſure in the Severities which are ſometimes forced to be uſed to another, thô it be for the good of the whole Body: So you may be aſſured, your Perſonal Sufferings do nearly touch me. But tho it ſhall not leſſen my Charity, it muſt abate of my Concern for you, to conſider, That nothing leſs could have been done to thoſe in your Circumſtances, which would have been conſiſtent with the Publick Safety; tho ſtill it is your Misfortune, not your Wilfulneſs, that renders you obnoxious, for which Cauſe I will uſe my utmoſt Endeavours in the Spirit of Meekneſs to reſtore you. The Task indeed is difficult, but I am acted by Love to your Perſons, and that

deſpiſes the conſideration of Difficulty, ſo it may ſerve thoſe to whom it wiſhes well. There have been many learned Tracts written already, ſome of which you have not Read, and others I believe you cannot Anſwer, which having not given you ſatiſfaction, it would almoſt diſcourage me from making any further applications to you, if I did not hope our perſonal and particular Friendſhip would give ſome weight to ſo kind an Attempt. You know our ancient Acquaintance began in the Univerſity, continued in the Country, cemented by many mutual Endearments; we have always held the ſame Faith and the ſame Principles, as to the Doctrine, Worſhip and Government of the Proteſtant Church of *England*, and are now equally concerned for its ſafety and continuance; we joyned in oppoſing Republican and Arbitrary Deſigns, and have united our Endeavours againſt the Factors, both for Popery and Fanaticiſm; and we differ in nothing now, but about ſome *Political Maxims*, which may be determined, as well as diſputed, diverſly, without violating either our Faith or our Friendſhip.

The Main Queſtion is, Whether you may not lawfully take this Oath of Allegiance to their preſent Majeſties, notwithſtanding your former Oath to the late King. And here you run out into another Queſtion, and Enquire into the Juſtice

ſtice of all that contributed to this Revolution: Now that being nothing to your Caſe, who had no hand in it, and ſo have nothing to anſwer for it to God nor Man; ſuppoſing it were an ill thing in it ſelf, or that the Managers of it acted upon evil Principles, took ill Methods, or had bad Ends, you may and ought to leave this to be juſtified by thoſe whom it doth concern; but as to the thing it ſelf, it hath been made out, That if a King in a limited (tho Hereditary) Monarchy, do by all the Methods of illegal Force and Fraud, attempt to take away the Liberties of his People, and not only ſo, but to put by the rightful Heirs, and chooſe rather to deſert his Kingdom, than ſubmit to have theſe things redreſſed in a legal Parliament; the undoubted Heirs, together with the Eſtates of the Realm, may take the advantage of his Deſertion, and ſecure their Rights by reſtoring the Laws, and ſecuring the lawful Succeſſion; and if the King, who ſo deſerted, ſhall attempt to reſtore himſelf by Force, that he may be in a Condition to carry on his old Arbitrary Deſigns, they may reſiſt him: For otherwiſe you reſolve all the Rights of King and Kingdom into the Will of one Perſon, There is no ſuch thing as an Hereditary Kingdom: There is no difference between the Condition of a Free-born Engliſh Subject and a Turkiſh or French Slave.

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We have no benefit by our Rights if we may not claim them; no advantage by the Laws which ſecure them, if a King of *England* may break them all at his pleaſure: Theſe things, and many more, are ſaid by thoſe who Acted in the Revolution, and upon theſe Grounds they think themſelves not only innocent, but praiſe-worthy, as thoſe who acted according to the ancient Conſtitution of the Engliſh Monarchy, and ſaved both our Liberties and Religion from apparent Ruin, and reduced the Government to its Original Temperament, keeping as cloſe to the Succeſſion as the Caſe would bear, and (by barely paſſing him by, who rather choſe to deſert us, than to Govern by Law) have done a laſting Benefit to this and the next Ages, without hurting the Perſon of the late King, altering the Government into a Commonwealth, or introducing Confuſion into the Church, which were the great and inexcuſable Faults of thoſe who acted in the laſt Civil War. Perhaps you do not believe theſe Principles, and therefore if you pleaſe, we will ſuppoſe that the Actors in the Revolution cannot juſtifie what they did: However, you muſt grant that there is now a Government *de facto* ſet up, and your Buſineſs is only to enquire what you may ſafely do, who muſt ſtay in this Nation, and live under it: I dare ſay you believe it unlawful in the Northern

Witches

Witches to ſell, and in the Maſters of Ships to buy Winds, but if you were upon a juſt and neceſſary Occaſion obliged to ſayl in a Ship by ſuch a wind, the Queſtion is, whether you are bound to leap Over-board, and might not rather make your Voyage quietly, and take the advantage of an evil Act to which you did not contribute. You know in your own Conſcience you did not ſo much as wiſh King *James* his Deſertion, and yet that thing is now happened, and another Government ſet up, under which you muſt live, and you would enjoy, not only protection, but a beneficial and honourable Employment: And their preſent Majeſties are willing you ſhould do ſo, without reflection upon your Neutrality, and ſomewhat more; only their Parliament adviſes them, for their own ſecurity, to require an Oath of Allegiance from you: And it ſeems very rational to me that you ſhould take it, or be gone out of the Kingdom: For, do not all Governments require an Oath of thoſe that expect Protection and Priviledges from them? Doth not the King of *France* in all his new Conqueſts, exact an Oath from thoſe who owe no natural Allegiance to him? And would it not be ridiculous there to expect Advantages, or even Security under him, for thoſe who would not ſwear Allegiance to him, upon pretence of a former Obligation?

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But I ſuppoſe you think you are more ſtrictly bound by your Oath to King *James*, than Subjects are to their Princes in other Nations: And thô Thouſands in all Nations yearly fall into Circumſtances which diſcharge them from former Oaths, you only have the misfortune to be indiſpenſably obliged.

I will then only ask two Queſtions; Firſt, Whether thoſe great and good Biſhops, who now diſſent, were always of this Opinion? And ſecondly, If you and they now own that Oath ſtill binds you, what Security this Government can have of your peaceable Behaviour, or what Reaſon to Treat you as its Friends?

As to the Firſt, The Biſhops, who now diſſent, upon the firſt Notice of K. *James* his Diſſertion, did, with others, ſeize the Government, and the *Tower*, his great Magazine, impriſoned his Chancellor, his firſt Miniſter of State, and by a Solemn Embaſſy, offered the Adminiſtration to his Enemy; yea, ſome of them adviſed him to call a Convention without the abſent King's conſent, and ſat there, where his Title was to be tried, and by ſo doing, evidently ſubmitted the Diſpoſal of the Government to a Majority of Votes; and then the Abdicating Party carried it; and perhaps then they were angry, but who can help that?

I only Enquire, How men who look upon themſelves bound by Oath to maintain and defend King *James* in all his Titles and Powers, Preheminences and Authorities, could go ſo far to wreſt all theſe from him, and yet all the while take themſelves to be obliged to defend him in theſe againſt all Pretenders. I would rather in this Caſe be ſo charitable to believe, they thought themſelves diſcharged of that Oath, than to imagine they acted ſo contrary to an owned Obligation: And indeed, nothing can bring them off, but *Serò ſapiunt Phryges & Fuimus Troes*---: But thoſe who could do ſo much for their Opinion of a Regency, (without King *James* his conſent) I hope may now as innocently do ſo much as ſwear to the Government (which they helped to ſet up) for the Nations Peace and Settlement.

But Secondly, If they ſtill do plead the Obligation of their former Oath, then let them ſeriouſly read over that Oath, and tell us how this Government can be ſecured againſt their helping to reſtore King *James* to his *Rights* (as they call them) which they think they are bound to maintain and defend. They reply, they will live peaceably: But I ſay, if they make Conſcience of their former Oath, 'tis plain they cannot promiſe this; and if they did, it muſt be in Hypocriſie; becauſe they know (or think at leaſt)

that they have a *prior Obligation*, which makes the promiſing this as great a Sin as ſwearing Allegiance, and which ſhews the performing ſuch a Promiſe (if occaſion ever happen) to be a ſtill greater Sin. If therefore they ſhould engage to live peaceably under this Government, it muſt be underſtood only while no Enemy appears; that is, while their preſent Majeſties do not need their help; and when ever they do, they muſt not only be Neuters, but Enemies, and joyn with thoſe who come to deſtroy this Government, and to maintain K. *James* his Title. This being their Caſe, I leave it to any impartial man to judge what favour ſuch men can expect from a Government, which they believe they are under the Obligation of an Oath to deſtroy, ſo ſoon as occaſion ſerves.

Yet here I muſt ſtop a while to obſerve two things; Firſt, The Kindneſs of the Government towards you; and Secondly, The Returns ſome of you have made.

Firſt, I know not whether your Heroick Loyalty will allow you to account it any kindneſs to you, that the preſent King preſerved your Religion and your Liberties, thô others think this an ineſtimable Bleſſing to them and their Poſterity. But however the ſuſpending your Forfeiture for one whole Year after the Law made you obnoxious, is an Act of real Grace, and the conniving at ſuch

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as do yet notwithstanding two Acts of Parliament, both execute their Office, and receive all Dues, is certainly a great favour: And the complying Clergy treat you still as Brethren, there are none permitted to injure or affront you, nor have any of you suffered from the Government, except such as by their ill words or deeds have deserved it.

But then *secondly*, If it be enquired what Requital is made to the Government for this? First, Thô the greatest and wisest among you live peaceably, yet the greater number of such as dissent act otherwise: For they every where complain of being persecuted for their Conscience, which highly reflects upon the Government; many of them do every where assert K. *James* his Right, exclaim against the wrongs done him, and if they do not pray for, yet they scruple not to drink his Restauration; they censure and condemn the Laws as cruel and unjust; and when they have called our Master an *Usurper*, stick not to name such as comply, *perjured Rebels*; they have as perfectly forgot all the Injuries K. *James* did, and intended to do them, as they have all the Blessings K. *William* would have brought them: They write elaborate and spiteful *Histories of Passive Obedience*, meerly to insinuate into the Laity, that they ought to account all the consenting Clergy no better than Apostates from their old Principles: They keep

too much Company with Papiſts, whom they ſupport in their Obſtinacy, and hinder their Converſion, as well as their Compliance with the preſent Powers: They believe and ſpread the factious and falſe News invented by *Jeſuits* to ſupport their ſinking Intereſt; and thô I hope none of them are concerned in inviting the *French* to make this Invaſion, yet ſome of the Gentlemen who are ſecured on that account, are ſuch as have admired even *the meaneſt of the Non-ſwearers*, and valued them more than the moſt worthy of ſuch as have complied. All which conſidered, we muſt confeſs there ſeems no great reaſon why the preſent Government ſhould any longer make the Laws contemptible, by forbearing to put them in Execution againſt ſome of the moſt clamorous of theſe men, who ſo many ways declare themſelves its mortal Enemies.

But you will ſay, The Biſhops, and the better ſort of them, do not act thus; and I readily own it. But then it cannot be denied, but that their Non-compliance hath been one great Encouragement to the Papiſts to continue this War, and a main hindrance of our ſpeedy Settlement. For the *Romaniſts* are a deſpicable handful here, they could have had no hopes to reſtore their deſerting King by their own Power and Intereſt, and probably would never have endeavoured it, had they

they not been encouraged to it, by ſeeing ſome of the Clergy with their Friends of all Qualities fall off from the preſent Government, and long for the Reſtauration of the former. This made them begin to ſollicit their deſpairing Maſter, and gave him Arguments to engage his great *Patron* to lend him Men and Moneys to carry on this bloody War; which, had we been unanimous, had never been begun, or muſt have ſoon ended. Wherefore I leave it to theſe Gentlemen to conſider, what Blood and Treaſures they have unhappily been the occaſion of ſpending. And methinks they ſhould be ſenſible of it, how much this woful Effect of their Diſſenting muſt abate of the Merit of their former Services: For theſe laſt Acts have done ſo much Miſchief toward ſupporting the Popiſh Intereſt, and caſting away all the Lives and Money that muſt be ſpent to oppoſe it, that nothing in this World, but the good they formerly did, could compenſate for; nor even that, but as it was a principal Means to to bring on this happy Revolution.

But I know you will ſay, They cannot help thoſe ill Effects of their Non-compliance, ſince they are things not deſigned by them. And I dare not ſay they are: Yet I hope they will grant they have the leſs pretence to Favour, who are (thô but accidentally) concerned in hindering

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our Settlement, and prolonging this dreadful and dangerous, as well as coſtly and cruel War.

You ſay they have good Reaſons for their diſſenting, and you are ſo kind as to acquaint me with ſome of their Reaſons, which are theſe:

Firſt, *Their believing themſelves obliged by their Oath to* K. James.

Secondly, *Their perſwaſion that if he had ſtayed, or were reſtored, he would ſettle the Church of* England, *and govern by Law.*

Thirdly, *Their belief that* K. William *intends to ſet up Presbytery here, as he hath done in* Scotland.

Fourthly, *Their obſerving ſo great a Similitude between this Revolution and that in* 1641.

Fifthly, *The diſhonour of Retreating, after having ſo openly declared they would never comply.*

Sixthly, *The great number of Diſſenters, which makes them ſafe in their Non-compliance.*

Now I will calmly examine all theſe Pretences; and if their be no weight in them ſufficient to ballance the Miſchiefs that may come on the Church and Nation, and will fall on your ſelves, by your Diſſenting, I hope you may be perſwaded to comply.

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As to the *firſt*, I have partly conſidered it already, and ſhall only add now that you have performed that Oath to him ſo long as he was in a Capacity to receive it; and that you had no hand in putting him out of that Capacity. But whether his own deſerting us, or the preſent King's Conqueſt, did deveſt him, this is certain, that he is now deveſted of all Power to protect or govern us here, as much as if he were actually dead: And ſince the Oath between a King and his People is mutual; and he ſwore to Conditions which we know by ſufficient trial that he would not have performed had he ſtayed; and he is now utterly uncapable to perform, thô he ſhould be inclined to it: ſurely we muſt not be bound to our Conditions, when his part cannot be performed to us. You will ſay, there is no ſuch *Proviſo* in the Oath, that the Obligation ſhould ceaſe when the King could no longer protect us. I reply, That ſuch Clauſes are in their nature odious, and too ingrateful to be expreſſed: but in all mutual Covenants they are ſuppoſed. So, for Example, in the Marriage Covenant, which is a mutual Oath, there is no mention of Divorce; and yet for certain Cauſes the Law will order a Divorce, and diſcharge the innocent Party. And truly unleſs there be ſome Caſes beſides Natural Death, in which our Oath ceaſes

to

to bind us, the Caſe of Subjects may be extreamly intollerable. Particularly in *Portugal*, all the Subjects muſt be ſaid to be perjured when they ſwore to a new King, while *Alfonſo* was living, and was laid by for being uncapable to Govern. And ſo are all they perjured by this Principle alſo, who live in a conquered City or Country, and are forced to ſwear to the Conquerour, while their Natural and Rightful Soveraign lives. It muſt therefore be granted, that *Madneſs* and *Conqueſt* may ſo far take off the Obligation of a People to their living King, that they may innocently ſwear to another: And it is clear, that both theſe concurred in our Caſe. Beſides, if that Oath do ſtill oblige you, it binds you to riſe up in Arms for the late King, to diſcover all the Secrets of this Government to him, and to contrive by all means to reſtore him: that is, it would bind you to too much. You took it, that you might be protected, and now the keeping of it is impracticable, ſince not you, but K. *James* and others have made his Caſe deſperate. Wherefore, if he had that Affection for you which he ought to have, he himſelf ought by open Declaration to diſcharge you from it; as *Alfonſo* King of *Naples* did to his Subjects, when the French drove him out of his Kingdoms: And if he do not actually do this, our Law effectually doth it by de-

declaring, That no Subject of *England* ſhall ſuffer for paying his Allegiance to the King in being, thô there be another living at that time, who Claims to be King of Right. This Caſe often happened here in the Wars between *York* and *Lancaſter*, and he would be very ſevere upon his own Anceſtors, who would make them all perjured who then ſwore to the reigning King, while another at the ſame time claimed the Crown.

Nor is it for you and me, or any private Subjects, to determine Titles; our Allegiance is due to him that doth Reign; and the People of *England*, in all doubtful Caſes, always did take upon them in Parliaments or Conventions to judge who ſhould have the Crown. And ſo they have done now; and if they have judged ill, it is their Fault, not yours; you did perform your Oath to K. *James* ſo long as he ſtayed; but ſince he deſerted, and his next Heir is Crowned, with Him, who bravely prevented her unjuſt Excluſion, you muſt now remember the Crown takes away all Defects; you and I are private Subjects, and muſt promiſe and pay our Allegiance to him that adminiſters to us Law and Juſtice, and doth protect us in all Capacities. If any wrong us in our Eſtates, or hurt our Perſons, we fly to their preſent Majeſties Laws for redreſs;

and that to me ſeems as much an owning them as ſwearing Allegiance; unleſs you think we may make uſe of this Government to ſerve our own ends, and do nothing to ſerve and ſecure it.

I am ſure K. *James* the firſt obſerves, That it was a moſt unjuſt and unreaſonable thing in the Pope to allow the *Romaniſts* to ſtay here, and expect they ſhould have the benefit of Subjects, and yet forbid them to ſwear Allegiance. That wiſe King ſaith, He muſt call them all out of *England*, or be content they ſhould be made Outlaws here, if he would not give them leave to ſwear Allegiance to him from whom they expected Protection. So that if you do, and muſt ſtay here, as the late K. *James* hath ordered the matter, and as your Circumſtances ſtand, no doubt you are diſcharged from your Oath of Allegiance to him, and may take another.

Secondly, You object the probability of King *James* his Reformation, if he had ſtayed, or were reſtored; and you think it hard that a King ſhould not be allowed the benefit of Repentance; or that you ſhould forſake him while you have theſe hopes.

I anſwer, This doth not properly belong to our Enquiry, Whether you may not take an Oath to this Government? becauſe this Caſe is now not likely to be tried. Whatever your Af-

Affection for him inclines you to hope and believe concerning him, the Nation in general, and its Repreſentatives, could neither believe his Promiſes, nor hope for any Reformation. They ſaw he had taken an Oath, and made a moſt Solemn Promiſe to preſerve the Church of *England*, and govern by Law; yet all his Actions afterwards made it appear, that he did not ſo much as intend to keep either the Promiſe or Oath, not not when he made them; for he was no ſooner ſettled in the Throne, than he began, no only to act contrary to Law, and to undermine the Church, but to contrive Methods to be free from all Laws, and to ſubvert the Proteſtant Religion. He had for near Twenty years together accuſtomed himſelf to diſſemble with God, in profeſſing himſelf a Proteſtant, and receiving the Sacrament in our Church, whilſt he was a Papiſt; and after all this, can any one think he ſhould ſcruple to deceive Men for that Intereſt? We certainly know that he both ſwore and promiſed, neither to deſtroy the Church of *England*, nor our Rights and Liberties ſettled by Law: but we are as certain of his open and vigorous Endeavours to rob us, both of our Religion and our Rights, by ſetting up Popery and Arbitrary Power.

As for his Promiſes to reform, when his Enemy was upon him, and the whole Nation averſe to

him, they were clearly the Effects of Fear, not any real Change of his Mind: and therefore upon any glimpſe of Hopes that the Prince of *Orange* would not come, he reverſed his Orders, both as to reſtoring *Magdalen Colledge*, and other things; and had the Prince been defeated, we ſhould have ſeen him return to his old Methods with more violence: But when he ſaw the Prince proſpered, even when the *Writs* were ſigned for calling a Parliament, and the Treaty was begun, he was more afraid of being tied up to his Promiſes, than of any hurt to his Perſon; and therefore at firſt he voluntarily attempted to get out of the Kingdom, which ſhews he reſolved not to be bound to govern by Law, but choſe rather to leave his Kingdom than have it upon thoſe terms; and becauſe Popery can never be ſet up but by Arbitrary Power, and nothing but a Reſtauration by force can put him into thoſe Circumſtances, he (never ſince he went) uſed any other Method, that we know of, but Force to be reſtored again.

You will ſay, This was the Jeſuits Counſel, who had rather K. *James* ſhould be no King at all, than not to be King to their purpoſes. And I will freely grant this: But then ſuppoſe him to be never ſo well inclined, and never ſo well reſolved; ſuppoſe him to bind himſelf by Oaths, Laws, and Declarations; what hopes can we have

that

that he will ever perform his Promiſes, who is ſo abſolutely in the Jeſuits hands? So that you hope for Contradictions and Impoſſibilities, while you hope that K. *James* will ever preſerve the Church of *England*; for his Reſtauration in all Humane probability is the direct way to her utter ruine.

Nor have his Afflictions made him any kinder to Proteſtants; witneſs his Acts in *Ireland*, during his late abode in that Kingdom; he is now more exaſperated than ever, and is ſo deep in the Intereſts of that cruel Perſecutor of *France*, that it is impoſſible he ſhould reform if he were reſtored: And therefore I cannot think my Religion can bind me to do Acts which directly and viſibly tend to its extirpation; and conſequently, all thoſe hopes upon which you ground your deſire to retain your Allegiance to him are vain, as you would certainly find by woful Experience, if that ever ſhould be the Caſe.

Thirdly, You fear your ſwearing Allegiance to K. *William* may tend to the ruine of the Church of *England*; for if he were once ſettled in Peace, you doubt he would ſet up Presbytery here, as he hath already done in *Scotland*.

Your concern for the Church of *England* is highly commendable; but that Jealouſie, which is the effect of it, is perfectly groundleſs. King *William*'s Mother was intirely for the Church of

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England, and ſhe gave him the firſt Principles of Religion; his moſt pious and vertuous *Queen* is now, and ever was, zealous for this Church; and thô while he lived in *Holland*, he was obliged to comply with the way of Worſhip there eſtabliſhed, which is ſound and right in the main, yet he hath declared to divers Perſons, he ever had an high eſteem for our Church, and hath made it good by conſtant Communion with us ever ſince he came among us. Yea, when the Example of K. *James*, and the neceſſity of his Affairs obliged him to move for ſome favour to Diſſenters; He did not ſo much as deſire any one eſſential Alteration to be made for them. Beſides, he hath made us many Promiſes, and confirmed them with his Coronation Oath, to preſerve this Church; and 'till he hath broken ſome of thoſe Promiſes, it is moſt uncharitable to ſuſpect him.

For my part, I think the Church of *England* ſafe under him; Firſt, Becauſe thoſe who love it as well as you or I, and are neareſt to him, aſſure me, That his Majeſty would not injure the Church of *England*, if it were never ſo much in his power. Secondly, Becauſe the main Body of the Nation is ſo zealous for its preſervation, that if he had any ſuch Inclinations, it would not be eaſie for him to effect it; and he is ſo wiſe a Prince, that others cannot perſwade him to do a thing ſo viſibly a-

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gainſt his own Intereſt, and having ſo late an Example before his Eyes, that it was K. *James* his Ruine to attempt it.

As for what you ſay of *Scotland*, 'tis true, Preſbytery is ſet up there; but it is falſe and uncharitable to impute this to the King. 'Tis plain, that of them which there call themſelves Epiſcopal, a very great Number did cleave to K. *James*, and deſerted the Parliament; and by that means gave the other Party an advantage to ſet up their own way. And that other Party, finding the King embroiled in both his other Kingdoms, took that opportunity to preſs it upon him, in a Juncture when dire neceſſity, and the obſtinacy of too many of the Epiſcopal men forced him to conſent to it. Wherefore this no way ſhews his Majeſties Inclinations to ſet up Presbytery, even in *Scotland*; much leſs doth it prove he would ſet it up here, where the Circumſtances are quite different; for here the main Body of the People hate that Government, and will be ſo far from deſiring it, that they will not endure it: So that, as to this, your Fears of K. *William* are as vain as your Hopes of K. *James*.

Only I muſt tell you, if all our Epiſcopal Clergy and Gentry had followed the Scotch Method, and oppoſed K. *William* as they did, I know not but the Diſſenters unanimous declaring on his ſide,

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as all did but ſome of the Quakers, and their profeſſing ſo much Zeal for him, might have tempted him to have done them greater Favours than he did. And therefore had no Church of *England*-men been wiſer than you and your Friends, that might have ruined the Church; whereas now we ſee our Friends are the Majority, both in the Council and in the Parliament. Herein they, who comply with the Government, have done their parts for the ſecuring of the Church: And if you do rejoyce in its preſervation under this Revolution, theſe are, under God, the Inſtruments to whom you are obliged for that mighty Bleſſing, to the eſtabliſhing and perpetuating whereof you would ſtill contribute by your innocent Compliance with this Government, under which the Diſſenters have no advantage but what your differing from the reſt of your Brethren gives them.

Fourthly, You alledge that there is a great Similitude between this Revolution and that in 1641. and therefore you cannot approve now, what you have ſo juſtly condemned in that Caſe.

Now this is an Argument that you love the Monarchy, as the former was that you lov'd the Church. But thô your Loyalty be commendable, yet you are miſtaken in your Compariſon; there being many conſiderable differences between this Revolution and that in 41. Firſt, As to the Occaſions

ſions of both. Secondly, As to the Managers. Thirdly, As to the Event: Of which take this ſhort Account.

Firſt, The Occaſions of that War was given by a diſcontented Republican part of the People, who reſolved to pick a quarrel with a pious and juſt King; and therefore that which they accuſed him of, was generally falſe, or deſignedly aggravated; and when he would have been content with his Legal Prerogative, they reſolved to yield to no Terms of Accommodation. Their Demands grew high with their Succeſſes; 'till at laſt they came to ſhew it was his Life they ſought for, and an utter Subverſion of the Monarchy.

But here in our Caſe, the *King* was really a Papiſt, which was falſly laid to his Father's Charge. The People here deſire to be quiet, offered him fair terms for his Popiſh Friends, ſubmitted to all his illegal Proceedings for divers years. The King in this Caſe was the Aggreſſor, and actually attempted to deſtroy both our Laws and Religion, which was moſt unjuſtly charged upon K. *Charles* the Martyr. Yea, he had proceeded further, than the worſt of his Fathers Enemies ever accuſed him of; He reſolved he would be Abſolute and Arbitrary, and raiſed a ſtanding Army, and kept it up for that purpoſe; ſo that, if the Prince of *Orange* had not come over as he did, and a number of the

People joyned with him in their own neceſſary Defence, and in aſſerting their Laws, Rights, Liberties, and Religion, together with the Rights of all the Proteſtant Succeſſors, all had been gone irrecoverably. Their Arms were neceſſary and meerly defenſive, for they offered to lay them down again, if all Grievances might be redreſſed by a Free-Parliament, and they indempnified for requiring what was their legal due: But thoſe in 41 began an Offenſive War, took up Arms againſt their King, upon ſlight Pretences, and would not by any Conceſſions be brought to lay them down again.

And ſecondly, This difference as to the Occaſions of both Wars, was the effect of the different ſort of men who managed both theſe Revolutions. They in 41 were Fanatical and Republican men, who hated both the eſtabliſhed Government and Religion; they believed it lawful to depoſe Kings for ſingle acts of Miſ-government; yea, they held that their Subjects gave them all their Power, and might not only Depoſe, but Condemn and put them to Death for ſuch things as they pleaſed to call Crimes. But the greateſt part of ſuch as acted in this Revolution, are men who love both the Church and the Monarchy, who (had K. *James* ſtaid and ſubmitted all to a Legal free Parliament) would not have ſuffered him to have been depoſed; and as it was, when he was in their

their power, would not touch his Perſon. They could not in conſcience fight for him againſt their Religion, and againſt their Friend, who came to reſcue it from Extirpation; and yet they had no mind to fight againſt him, and therefore moved a Treaty, and rejoiced to hear it was begun. It was the Jeſuits counſel, not theirs, which ſo far govern'd that unfortunate King, as to make him break off his Treaty, and rather deſert his Kingdom, than ſtay to do the right that was demanded of him. By which Deſertion he left a Forreign Prince in poſſeſſion, who thereby had the right of a Conqueſt over K. *James*, and withal left him and the People of this Kingdom to do that right to themſelves, which He ought to have done.

Thirdly, As to the end of both Revolutions, that ended in the Horrid Murder of the King, in the Diſſolution of the Government, which was turned into a Commonwealth, in the Extirpation of Biſhops, and the Deprivation of all the Temporal Lords of their Birth-rights: But this ends more happily; for here the Perſon of the late King was not hurt, and thô his Deſertion made it neceſſary to ſeize the Government, there was nothing changed in it but the Perſon and his illegal Methods; he ſuffered in nothing but in the loſs of that Authority, which yet they did not take from him, but he deveſted himſelf of. The Monarchy is preſerved in our pre-

ſent King, the Succeſſion after him will be the ſame as it would have been after K. *James*, and it is ſecured as much as is poſſible by the advancing of the next undoubted Heir to be actual Queen together with him, that reſcued our Religion and her Title. The Church is in the ſame ſtate it was, our Laws, and Parliaments, and all things kept in their old Channel; ſo that there is a very great difference, and it muſt argue much Ignorance or Malice in thoſe who urge theſe two Revolutions as being exactly parallel.

Our Anceſtors in the time of the Barons Wars, and ſince, did often take up defenſive Arms, and obliged their Kings to do them right; and when that could no otherwiſe be had, laid ſome of them aſide, but ſtill kept up the Monarchy and the Succeſſion too as near as was poſſible. Many of the ancient Hiſtorians commend them for this, which yet is more than has been acted now: But neither our Forefathers, nor we, ever thought we could try a King for his Life, condemn and execute him, and paſs by, yea exclude his Heirs, and ſet up a new Form of Government, and take away at once Two of the Three Eſtates. This was never done but once by the Gentlemen of 41, whoſe Principles and Practiſes are as much deteſted by thoſe of the Church of *England*, who now comply with this Government, as by any of you who do not ſwear:

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So that they are extreamly injured by this odious and unjuſt compariſon. There were no doubt ſome who joi ned in the Revolution that had the old Republican Principles, and perhaps Deſigns, but we may thank God and thoſe loyal Gentlemen of the Church of *England* who complied, both that King *James* fell ſo eaſily, and that both the Monarchy and the Succeſſion are preſerved; all which would have been in a much worſe condition, if all had held off their hands as you, and many of your Friends did.

There is but one Objection remains under this Head, which is, that theſe Proceedings open a Gap for Rebellion and Depoſing of Kings ſo oft as they do not pleaſe the People. To which I reply, That K. *James*'s Proceedings would have opened a Gap for all our Kings to have perſecuted and enſlaved their People ſo oft as they pleaſed; and I know not well whether is the greater inconvenience, unleſs we ſhall ſay the latter, becauſe the former only hurts one, the other ruins millions at once. But beſides, if the People of *England* ſtrictly follow this Example, there can be no great danger, either of frequent Rebellions, or of Depoſing Kings: For, take this Matter at the worſt, they muſt never take any, but only defenſive Arms, nor them till Petitions and all other Methods fail, and this not for ſingle acts of Miſ-government, but only when a

Prince

Prince will take away their Religion and Civil Rights all at once, and alter the Conſtitution of the Government by force, and the moſt illegal Methods; and after all, they muſt not hurt his Perſon, but let him go off ſafely if he pleaſe; nor may they break the Succeſſion, or alter the Monarchy; and if ever there be like danger of Perſecution and Arbitrary Power, I can ſee no great harm if this Example be made a Precedent.

Fifthly, You ſeem to ſay it looks like Levity and Inconſtancy after a declared Reſolution, and ſo long time of Conſideration, to change your mind.

To which the Reply is very eaſie, That good and wiſe men never count it any ſhame to embrace the Truth; and if theſe, or other Arguments, do really convince you, it then becomes your Duty to own your former Miſtakes, and comply with your preſent Convictions. *It is not lightneſs* (ſaith *Seneca*) *to depart from a known and detected Error, and we ought freely to confeſs*, I once thought otherwiſe, and was deceived.---*It is no diſgrace to change, when the thing it ſelf is changed. Sen. de benef.* 4.38. There are none of us ſo happy as not to be ſometimes miſtaken, and therefore we ought not to be too poſitive in our Opinions, (eſpecially in diſputable Points) nor too confident that we ſhall always be of the ſame mind: And it is the very ſame Root of Pride, from whence ſprings, both this bold Dogmaticalneſs

maticalneſs concerning our own Notions, and that ſhame of retracting them when they appear falſe or miſchievous. It is a laſting honour to St. *Auguſtine*, that he retracted in writing whatever had unwarily ſlipped from his Pen, and I ſhall never count it my diſgrace to confeſs, That till I ſaw the horrid effects of unlimited Monarchy and abſolute Power in the dreadful Perſecution in *France*, and in thoſe Preparations made here to write after the ſame Copy; I did highly admire thoſe Opinions which too much advance the Power of Kings, and make all their Subjects Slaves. The vile exorbitances of Popular Liberty, which had been ſo miſchievous in the long Rebellion, were the only Evils in Government we laboured to prevent after the Reſtauration. And the *Jeſuits* (whoſe Buſineſs could no way be done but by ſuch an abſolute Power in a King (who was in due time to declare himſelf their Convert) as ſet him above all Law, and ſuch kind of Paſſive Obedience in the Subject, as ſtripped them of all benefits by the Laws) did therefore ſecretly puſh ſome of us on, under the Notion of Loyalty, and in deteſtation of Rebellion, to skrew up thoſe Points to the higheſt pitch: But ſome of us early diſcovered that our Zeal had out-run both the Truth and Diſcretion alſo, that we were unwarily made their Tools to carry on their Deſigns: And then we

began

began to consider and own our former Mistakes, and to see the reason and necessity of prescribing certain Limits, both to the Power of Kings, and to the Duty of Subjects, yea, at last the hottest men for miscalled Loyalty were forced to oppose the Dispensing Power, *&c.* And for my part, I am so little ashamed of changing my Opinion in these Matters, that I think I have nothing to blush for, but that I no sooner discovered my Error, and the ungrateful and odious use that was intended to be made of it. This is no change in my Faith, no alteration in my Opinion, as to any of the 39 Articles, or the Liturgy, as to the Canons or the Hierarchy of the Church of *England*; nor is it any change of my esteem for Monarchy, or for Passive Obedience it self; but a stricter enquiry into the Constitution of our Government, and a limiting of Passive Obedience to private Subjects; so that our excellent Monarchy may be preserved in a due temperament, and so that the King cannot deprive the Community of their Rights, nor the Subjects resist him, but in those Cases only which apparently tend to alter the Government, and take away all their legal Priviledges. And, *Dear Sir*, when you and I meet, I doubt not but to satisfie you, that these Principles are not only true, but were as necessary to be taught in K. *James*'s time, as the others were thought to be after the long Re-

Rebellion. Wherefore I entreat you will lay aſide your Prejudices, and conſider not what you have believed, but what is true in it ſelf, and neceſſary to preſerve your Religion, and your Native Country. It is no honour to be ſo poſitive as not to endure to examine into your former Principles, and it can be no diſgrace to yield to thoſe Arguments that have already convinced thouſands who were once of your Opinion; we ſhall receive you with joy, and the Government will entertain you with all encouragement. I know none can blame or upbraid you but Papiſts, whoſe Intereſt you ceaſe to ſerve, and who were as great Republicans under K. *James* the Firſt, as they were *huffingly Loyal* under K. *James* the Second.

Laſtly, You may imagine your ſelves ſecure from ſuffering the extremity of the Law, becauſe of your great number, and ſeem to intimate it would neither be for the honour nor ſafety of the Government to puniſh you, and conſequently you may ſafely ſtand out. But if you will enquire more ſtrictly, the number of the Clergy who do not ſwear, is very ſmall. The Biſhops are but *ſix*, out of ſix and twenty. The inferiour Clergy not more than *two hundred* out of *ten thouſand* in all *England* and *Wales*; and in that Dioceſs where I am beſt acquainted, wherein there are above 450 Eccleſiaſtical Benefices and Promotions, there are but

twelve who finally refuſe the Oath, or however but *fourteen*, which is a very ſmall proportion, and by no means to be thought conſiderable, eſpecially ſince among theſe there are men of very mean Parts, and ſome of no good Reputation for their Morals, and ſo are a mixt Company, as well as thoſe who do comply; ſo that they are neither formidable for their number, nor abſolutely neceſſary for the ſupply of the Church, there being a greater number of fit men even in the Univerſities who want preferment, than can go off on this account, ſo that if their Majeſties do forbear to take the Forfeiture, it is pure kindneſs and compaſſion to you; and if you do not interpret it as an Act of Grace, yea, if it does not oblige you at laſt to ſubmit, you do not deſerve to have it much longer continued.

Nor can I ſee why the Government ſhould fear either ſcandal or danger in diſplacing you, after the Law hath ſo long ago pronounced Sentence on you. It is their honour to have ſpared you ſo long as their ſeemed any hopes; but if you ſtill remain under ſuch Prejudices, that you will not, or cannot comply, they muſt for their own ſafety ſupply the Churches with men who love and adhere to the Government; and if you have formerly acted meritoriouſly, you make your ſelves uncapable to be rewarded for it; ſo that it is your fault, not theirs,

that

that your Services are not requited. And what danger can there be to the Government by taking the Forfeiture? they will oblige as many and more than they diſpleaſe, and thoſe whom they diſoblige are only ſuch as no kindneſs could ever gain; they are angry now, and they can but be ſo when the Law is put in execution. They reſolve not to do this Government any good, if it leave them in poſſeſſion; and they can do it leſs miſchief when they are removed; ſo that, no doubt, in a very ſhort time you will feel the effects of your unhappy and ill-grounded Reſolution, and even thoſe who pity you cannot help you.

And now 'tis time to conclude, having proved the taking the Oath to be lawful, and laboured to remove all the Objections you have againſt it. Wherefore I beg of you to lay aſide all Prejudice; and for the Churches ſake, in which you ſeem to make a Schiſm; for your Native Countries ſake, which you expoſe by this Diviſion; for your complying Brethrens ſake, who pity and pray for you; and for your own and your Families ſake; let not a *Notion in Politicks* keep us at this diſtance, and bring ſo many Calamities on you. The Oath is ſhort and modeſt, nothing but what is very neceſſary, and required in all Governments, and what is fit to be ſworn by all that expect and receive Protection. Your hopes

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of King *James* are all vain, and so are your Jealousies of King *William*; the one would as certainly ruine, as the other will preserve the Church of *England*; and that was, and I hope is, very dear to you. Will you for a Nicety and Scruple, which may be so fully satisfied and solved, endanger your Religion and the whole Nation? and give such Advantages to Papists by countenancing them, and to the Fanaticks by opposing the present Government, who do not fail to represent it even to the Churches prejudice? Remember your Condition in 1688. and who it was (under God) that rescued you from it. Stand up and joyn with your Country-men in opposing *French* and *Irish* Force. Rely no longer on *Jesuitical* Promises, clear your selves from the Imputation of being Favourers of Popery, and by this one wise and innocent Act provide for your own, the Kingdoms, and the Churches Peace. Farewel, and when we meet, you will find me, as I always was,

Sir,

Your faithful Friend and

affectionate Brother.